

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SHUM, XR, XS

SUBJ: PROPOSED NGO CONFERENCE ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN THE AMERICAS

SUMMARY: NGO CONFERENCE IS PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER AT THE PALAIS
ON THE THEME OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN
THE AMERICAS, AND NGO REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TURNED DOWN THE
PROMPTING OF WINSPEARE'S OFFICE THAT THE GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE OF
THE THEME BE BROADENED. END SUMMARY.

1. JENSEN IN WINSPEARE'S OFFICE AT THE PALAIS HAS ALERTED US
UNOFFICIALLY TO THE INTENTION OF NGO'S TO CONDUCT THEIR ANNUAL
CONFERENCE THIS YEAR ON THE THEME OF QTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN THE AMERICAS UNQTE. ONE-WEEK
CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED FOR MID- TO LATE SEPTEMBER. TRADITIONALLY,
THE PALAIS HAS PROVIDED SPACE (BUT NO OTHER SUPPORT) FOR THESE
CONFERENCES, AND WINSPEARE EXPECTS A FORMAL REQUEST SOON FOR
SPACE FOR THE SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE.

2. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH NGO REPRESENTATIVES, PALAIS
OFFICIALS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE THEME HAD BEEN NARROWED
DOWN TO QTE THE AMERICAS UNQTE AND URGED RECONSIDERATION OF THE
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SCOPE. (WINSPEARE FORESEES THE POSSIBILITY OF PROTESTS FROM
GOVERNMENTS IF UN FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR A CONFERENCE
WHICH SINGLES OUT FOR ATTENTION A SINGLE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA, AND
RECOGNIZES THAT THE UNOFFICIAL CHARACTER OF THE CONFERENCE MAY
EASILY BECOME LOST IN PRESS COVERAGE.) NGO REPRESENTATIVES
RETURNED TO STATE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS ADAMANT OPPOSITION
AMONG MEMBERS OF THE NGO SUBCOMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING

CONFERENCE THEMES ABOUT BROADENING THE SCOPE BEYOND THE AMERICAS. WINSPEARE UNDERSTANDS THAT SPOKESMEN FOR AMERICAN INDIAN GROUPS HAD INSISTED UPON THIS EXPLICIT SCOPE, BUT UNDERSTANDS ALSO THAT NGO SPOKESMEN IN NEW YORK (MRS. WIENER WAS CITED) ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE DECISION OF THE GENEVA SUBCOMMITTEE.

3. THERE IS ONE POSSIBLE PRECEDENT FOR THE NARROW GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE OF THE THEME: THE 1974 CONFERENCE MET ON THE THEME OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN EUROPE. THESE NGO CONFERENCES ARE EXPECTED TO REFLECT SUBJECTS UNDER STUDY WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM, AND AFTER SOME ANGUISHING UN OFFICIALS RATIONALIZED THEN THAT THE THEME DID CORRESPOND WITH AN ILO STUDY.

4. WINSPEARE'S OFFICE PLANS TO TELEPHONE UNDER SECRETARY BUFFUM'S OFFICE IN NEW YORK MARCH 3 TO REPORT HOW THINGS STAND AND GET HIS GUIDANCE. MEANWHILE, THE PALAIS IS MAKING INFORMAL SOUNDINGS AMONG CERTAIN MISSIONS HERE. JENSEN DOUBTED THAT THE UN WOULD DENY SPACE TO THE CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, UNLESS ONE OR MORE GOVERNMENTS OBJECTED.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON THE POSTURE WE SHOULD TAKE IN REPLYING TO JENSEN. CATTO

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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